Today, words fail! Awesome wonder takes over!

But we must speak to underscore the magnitude of what we celebrate with ringing Alleluias on this Easter Day.

Incredibly, one of us has overcome death and risen to a life beyond the grave. As St. Paul put it, “Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died”. (I Cor. 15:20)

On that glorious day, the first of the week, the disciples had a range of reactions to the Magdalene’s startling announcement: “I have seen the Lord” (Jn. 20:18). They experienced amazement, incredulity, excitement. Also, part of their reactions had to arise from the fact that a woman in their group was the bearer of these tidings; she proclaimed that their Beloved had emerged triumphantly from the tomb. She was the herald of this stupendous “good news” not they.

Following Mary Magdalene’s proclamation:

Peter and John race to the tomb one outstripping the other and encounter an empty sepulcher!

Two other disciples recognize their Lord on breaking bread with him. “Were not our hearts burning...” (Lk. 28:32)

The apostles tell Thomas, “We have seen the Lord!” (Jn. 20:24) And he doubts.

The eleven are also terribly afraid. In the evening of that same day they were found locked in a hiding place for fear of what those who had executed their Master might now do to them.

Christ’s Resurrection is an altogether glorious and fearsome moment in each of their lives!

Down through the centuries the paradox of death overcome by life in Christ has mesmerized, challenged, thrilled and confounded generations of human beings, including, people of faith. Paul addressed some of these sentiments to doubters in the early Christian community at Corinth: “if Christ is has not been raised ...then your faith has been in vain”. (I Cor. 15:14)

For us today, no less, this great question continues to confront us: did Jesus actually rise from death and become the Hope of humanity?. It is an ultimate consideration for us all. Paul’s
words ring down the halls of time: “if Christ has not been raised your faith is futile... If for this life only we have hoped in Christ we of all people are the most to be pitied”. (I Cor. 15:17,19)

Then what is called for today as always is a naked act of faith in Christ’s Resurrection. This act of faith is a concrete, daily set of choices and priorities. When we focus on those in most need including those suffering from violence, we become enabled to act in ways that illuminate the Resurrection. We can embrace the nonviolent cross as not only the way of eternal salvation but also of salvation in history. It is the model to truly integrating justice and peace.

The Awesome Wonder that Easter invites us into is also to enable a habit of creative imagination and courageous nonviolence in times of conflict and even in war.

Despite our understandable doubts misgivings, weak faith, by the grace of God under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit faithful followers of Jesus continue to stand trembling before this central event in human history and say, like Thomas, “my Lord and my God”. (Jn. 20:28)